

AAFES GIFTS FROM THE HOMEFRONT

DALLAS (Army News Service, March 25, 2003) -- Americans can now boost the morale and well-being of deployed soldiers with "Gifts From the Homefront" CertifiChecks for post exchanges.

These new PX gift certificates are the result of a partnership between the Army and Air Force Exchange Service and CertifiChecks, America's hometown gift certificate resource center.

Sending CertifiChecks is a way for people to show their support of service members, according to AAFES officials. CertifiChecks are redeemable for merchandise at all AAFES PX and base exchanges throughout the world.

Details are available to anyone via the AAFES Web site, www.aafes.com, and by phone at 1-877-770-GIFT (4438).

Sold by CertifiChecks, these gift certificates can be purchased 24 hours a day, seven days a week, every day of the year, and they come in denominations of \$10 and \$20. Each order includes a festive envelope.

Anyone may purchase these "Gifts From the Homefront" with a U.S. credit card or check, but only authorized AAFES customers can redeem them at any PX or BX.

At this time military authorities have advised that CertifiChecks can only be sent to a specific service member at his or her APO or US mailing address. AAFES officials said they are currently working to find a solution to allow CertifiChecks to be sent to units or non-specific troops.

AAFES currently has 34 stores located throughout Southwest Asia in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. CertifiChecks can be redeemed at these facilities to purchase such items as health and beauty items, soft drinks, candy, snack items, pre-paid calling cards and much more.

By clicking on the link "Gifts from the Homefront" at www.aafes.com, anyone can find out how to access an order form and complete the transaction online or via a toll-free number at 1-800-770-GIFT (4438).

The standard cost for the certificates is \$4.95 per order, which covers the costs for printing, mailing and handling of up to 20 certificates per order, providing they're going to the same address. Delivery of the certificates normally takes between 4-10 days, possibly longer if going overseas. Shipping and handling charges are slightly more for bulk orders of \$300.00 or more. "Gifts From the Homefront"

Sending CertifiChecks will help reduce the number of parcels being sent via the Military Postal Service Agency, AAFES officials said.

"This program should very much help relieve the critical mail transportation situation," said Ed Pardini, deputy director of the Military Postal Service Agency. "Different from previous contingencies, like Desert Shield/Desert Storm, Any Service member Mail and Donation campaigns are not the helpful idea they were then. Unfortunately, Any Service member and web-sponsored donation programs are counterproductive to the safety of our troops. The sheer volume also easily causes delays to the more important mail from families and loved ones due to transportation issues."

(Editor's note: Information taken from an AAFES release.)